

Senior Soviet spy shelves James Bond's style

By BRUCE WINTERS

A GOOD spy must be self-controlled, disciplined, resourceful, constantly critical of his own behavior and, when the situation demands it, brave and resolute.

He must never be short-tempered, absent-minded, talkative, nervous, or a coward. If he is working in a foreign country, he obviously must have full idiomatic command of the native language.

These qualifications are not from a Central Intelligence Agency handbook, but were given to aspiring young Soviet operatives by Col. Rudolf Ivanovich Abel, the former master spy who headed Russia's espionage network in the United States after World War II.

In semi-retirement

Now in semi-retirement at 65—it is widely believed he currently specializes in recruiting and training—Colonel Abel was swapped in 1962 for Francis Gary Powers, whose U-2 reconnaissance jet was shot down over Soviet soil.

Colonel Abel had completed 4 years, 8 months of a 30-year sentence when the exchange was made. Through careful public exposure over recent years, he has become a visible symbol of Russia's security apparatus—and, although one hesitates to use the phrase in this connection, almost its public relations man.

Last fall, for example, the colonel offered some recollections for the labor newspaper, *Trud*, and was selected for a filmed introduction to the nation's latest spy movie, a genuine thriller called, "The Dead Season," which even has been cleared for export.

The colonel's most recent parting of the veil came in *Moskovsky Komsomlets*, a youth newspaper. In an interview with Yevgeni Bechuk, he revealed some of the prerequisites for an efficient agent.

"Tiring, monotonous" job

To begin with he dispelled the fictional image of the two-fisted, gun-toting, girl-chasing spy popularized by writers with more imagination than actual experience in the often-dreary routines of espionage.

"The majority of books on this subject," Colonel Abel observed dourly, "are more or less for leisure-time reading, some more artistically done than others. The characters in these books, as a rule, are sort of supermen, possessing ideas, and sometimes supernatural qualities beyond those of mere mortal men."

So much for James Bond. But how did Colonel Abel characterize an agent's work, Mr. Bechuk asked.

"It is, first of all, difficult and persistent labor," he answered. "Very often tiring, monotonous, but demanding maximum concentration, attention and perception."

"This labor consists of petty, prosaic,

and frequently uninteresting moments. Labor where thorough preparation of an elementary step often requires ten times more time than the very step itself.

"The work in intelligence service demands from a person a self-discipline and self-limitation which are never dreamed of by admirers of spy stories."

Although not discounting entirely the possibilities for violence, he suggested that its appearance indicates an agent's mistake and the collapse of his mission. Gunplay, fighting, and high-speed automobile chases are last resorts that rarely happen in real life, the colonel added.

Attention to detail seemed to be the colonel's message, but no agent can completely control his destiny. Colonel Abel himself might still be operating in America if one of his men had not lost a hollowed-out coin that contained a snippet of incriminating microfilm.

German spies

Accident and coincidence likewise played a part in a story the colonel told Mr. Bechuk about the capture of two German spies in Moscow during the early days of World War II.

In a crowded commuter train headed for the capital, Colonel Abel had found himself squashed against two men speaking fluent Russian who nonetheless let slip total ignorance of the city's rail lines.

Their conversation, he said, reminded him of the train pattern around Berlin. At the Moscow station, he requested that the pair be detained for questioning. Within hours, their cover was broken.

Of his own days of American imprisonment, Colonel Abel said: "The sense of motherland, the duty fulfilled for the sake of it, never left me. . . . I believed that in trouble I would not stand alone, and I was not deceived in my expectations."

For those who want to follow his footsteps, the colonel suggested contacting the neighborhood State Security Office. Devotees of Sean Connery need not apply.

P-Winters, Bruce
Abel, Rudolph
CIA-Lion Powers, Francis
Gary

So in 1964 Dead Season